



Washington Middle School

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Glendive, MT 59330
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Katy Kennedy
Principal

Caleb Swanson
Dean of Students

Sherri Nissley
Counselor

Tuesday, April 30, 2024,

Dear new-to-be 6th-grade WMS Demons and Families,

Glendive Public Schools strives to meet the needs of our students. Our vision is "Excellence in Education." Washington Middle School wants to ensure we continue to grow for our students' success.

I have some exciting news. Beginning the 2024-2025 School Year, all **6th-graders will take a full year of reading**. In the past, our 6th-graders only had a required semester of reading. Our District and Washington Middle School's student performance in class and standardized testing results show that we need to help our students be more successful as readers. Previously, Washington Middle School dedicated less time to reading instruction than all district schools.

Why is Reading Important?

- Reading is key to success in all language and academic learning.
- Research shows consistent reading has been linked to higher math, science, and language scores as it improves comprehension skills and vocabulary.
- Developing a reading habit in middle school can instill a lifelong love of learning. Students who enjoy reading are more likely to continue educating themselves.
- Reading increases student confidence, independence, and vocabulary.
- Reading increases background knowledge.
- Reading is essential to build a critical foundation for developing logic and problem-solving skills.
- It impacts EVERY part of a student's life in and out of school.
- And so much more...

We have had to change a few things in our school schedule to make this change possible. Before the 2024-2025 school year, 6th-grade students could take band and choir. With the additional required semester of reading, there is not enough time in the school day to make this possible. As educators, we understand the importance of the arts and want to help students increase their development as musicians and readers. Those parents/guardians and students who wish to continue band and choir in 6th



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grade will be contacted by Washington Middle School, and further steps will need to be taken.

Thank you so much for your understanding of the need for this change. We are very excited about how a full year of reading instruction will impact our students' success at WMS and in the future. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions by email at kennedyk@glendiveschools.org or 406.377.3288.

Fondly,
Katy Kennedy
Principal
Washington Middle School